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# connections

*The Kingsborough Art Museum E-Newsletter*



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## KAM Exhibition Examines Vernacular Photography

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### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

A Sneak Peek - 3

Upcoming KAM events - 4

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Above: *Twins with twin ventriloquist dolls*, circa 1940s. Private Collection.

Vernacular photography--an umbrella term for photographs taken by non-professional, anonymous shutterbugs--will be the focus (pun intended) of a new virtual exhibition on the KAM website entitled *The American Eye: Vernacular Photography in the United States from the Brownie Camera to Instagram*. Starting March 10, some 300 images will be on view that reflect the surprising originality and aesthetic appeal of this typically undervalued branch of photography. The ubiquitous nature of snapshots, taken to record moments of daily life, have no doubt led to assumptions that vernacular photographs are lacking in creativity. As this exhibition hopes to show, this is not the case.



The exhibition was curated by KAM director Dr. Brian Edward Hack, from whose collection of vernacular photographs this exhibition was curated. Dr. Hack has been collecting these images for decades, seeking out those photographs that best exemplify the artistic merits of the genre. It is his belief, and the impetus behind the exhibition, that artistic excellence and aesthetic sense exist in everyday individuals even when they are outside the admittedly narrow boundaries of the term "artist." What these photographs may lack in technical finesse--they were taken with mass-produced cameras and developed by others, after all--they make up for in sheer inventiveness, interesting compositional choices, and intriguing, albeit occasionally ambiguous, narratives. Others are simply inexplicable, and yet remain captivating many decades after they were taken.

The exhibition can be viewed on the [KAM website](#) beginning March 10, 2021.

Above: *Mother and Child*, circa 1920s-1930s. Private Collection. Below: *Enthusiastic Racer*, circa 1900-1920. Private Collection.



## ***The American Eye: A Sneak Peek***



# UPCOMING KAM EVENTS

*Spring 2021*

## THE AMERICAN EYE CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST

*for Kingsborough students*

In conjunction with the Department of English's Creative Writing faculty, KAM is holding a contest for student writers inspired by the images in *The American Eye* exhibition.

See the [KAM website](#) for details.



Woman posing behind the *Statue of Liberty*, c.1960s. Private Collection.

## DIRECTIONS 2021: ANNUAL STUDENT ART EXHIBITION

Despite the current pandemic, KAM stalwartly continues the tradition of *Directions: Annual Student Art Exhibition*--in digital form.

June 2021



Larry Plotnick, *Still-Life*. From *Directions 2020*.

The [Kingsborough Art Museum](#) is currently closed due to COVID-19. When the college fully reopens, the hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 10 am to 3 pm. Admission is free.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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